

REMARKS

This application has been reviewed in light of the Office Action dated June 7, 2005. Claims 1-10 and 32-52 are presented for examination. Claims 1, 3, 32, 34, 42, 44, and 52 have been amended to define more clearly what Applicants regard as their invention. Claims 1, 32, 42, and 52 are in independent form. Favorable reconsideration is requested.

Claims 1, 2, 4, 5, 8-10, 32, 33, 35, 36, 39-43, 45, 46 and 49-52 were rejected under 35 U.S.C. § 103(a) as being obvious from U.S. Patent 6,757,826 (*Paltenghe*) in view of U.S. Patent 6,209,102 (*Hoover*). Claims 3, 34, and 44 were rejected under 35 U.S.C. § 103(a) as being obvious from *McConnell et al.* in view of *Paltenghe* and *Hoover*. Claims 6, 7, 37, 38, 47, and 48 were rejected under 35 U.S.C. § 103(a) as being obvious from *Paltenghe* and *Hoover* in view of U.S. Patent 5,650,943 (*Powell et al.*).

The rejection of Claim 1 will first be addressed.

As is described in the Amendment filed February 17, 2005, the present invention provides a system by means of which certain problems commonly encountered in computer security can be overcome. Such problems include the forgetfulness of users, and their consequent tendency to use passwords that are too easy for an unauthorized person to guess. The approach to which the present invention relates is one in which a user provides, not an ordinary password as such, but a sample of handwriting that can be compared to a registered sample to determine whether the user is authorized to access the computer or network, or not.

Without conceding the propriety of the rejection of independent Claim 1, that claim has been amended to further clarify that, in the control step, the displaying of the signature being inputted via the digitizer on the display unit is performed in a manner that

makes it difficult for others to discern the stroke of the signature as the stroke is being inputted via the digitizer in the inputting step, while yet allowing the user to discern the stroke of the signature as the stroke is inputted via the digitizer in the inputting step. For example, as amended, Claim 1 recites:

"1. A signature processing method for displaying a signature on a display unit, comprising:
an inputting step, of inputting a signature handwritten by a user via a digitizer, the signature being composed of at least one stroke; and
a control step, of displaying the signature being inputted via the digitizer on the display unit in a manner that makes it difficult for others to discern the stroke of the signature as the stroke is being inputted via the digitizer in said inputting step, while yet allowing the user to discern the stroke of the signature as the stroke is inputted via the digitizer in said inputting step."

As pointed out in the Amendment filed February 17, 2005, *Paltenghe* relates to a system that utilizes a signature in lieu of a password. As the Office Action correctly concedes, however, that patent does not teach or suggest displaying a signature being inputted via a digitizer on a display unit in a manner that makes it difficult for others to discern the stroke of the signature, as claimed in Claim 1.

Regarding *Hoover*, as described in the Amendment filed February 17, 2005, that patent relates to a system in which the user obtains access by inputting a password or PIN, and has the option of inputting the PIN or password using a mode in which a plurality of user-selectable fields, the displayed contents of which are in random order, and the proper values in which are selected by the user. For example, if a six-digit PIN is to be entered, six columns of digits may be displayed, with the digits in a different order in each, and the user selects the first digit of the PIN from the first column, the second from the second column, etc. Because the order of the numbers is different, and in fact is random (or the equivalent), in each column, a near-by person is at least hindered from seeing what

numbers are being inputted.

Hoover uses a bingo card as shown in Fig. 1 and "+" or "-" buttons as shown in Fig. 2 in an attempt to prevent an attacker from determining an access code by using histories of, for example, keyboard arrow key or mouse click selections. From col. 2, line 64 to col. 3, line 10, *Hoover* describes darkening a particular user selectable field so that its value is not visible except when the mouse or cursor is over that field, and also refers to replacing fields with asterisks except for the one being instantaneously inputted. However, because the field which is being instantaneously inputted remains visible, the *Hoover* method inadvertently can allow an attacker to discern the field (its contents) being instantaneously inputted.

It is respectfully submitted that, even if, assuming *arguendo*, *Paltenghe* and *Hoover* were to be combined in the manner proposed in the Office Action (which, in any event, is not admitted would have been obvious or technically feasible), the resulting combination still would not have the feature recited in Claim 1 of a control step of displaying a signature being inputted via a digitizer on a display unit in a manner that makes it difficult for others to discern the stroke of the signature as the stroke is being inputted via the digitizer in the inputting of the signature, while yet allowing the user to discern the stroke of the signature as the stroke is inputted via the digitizer in the inputting. Indeed, the result of any such combination would apparently be a system where the field in which a digital signature is being instantaneously inputted is identifiably displayed without concealment during the inputting, even though fields that were already populated may be dark or invisible. Consequently, a near-by person close enough seemingly would have an

opportunity in which to readily discern the signature if made in the ordinary fashion during the inputting. This would not be secure, and would not in any way approach the result provided by Applicants, and recited in Claim 1.

Furthermore, *Paltenghe* is not understood by Applicants to be concerned with a need to provide security against enabling an unwanted viewer to discern a displayed signature during inputting, as is Applicant's invention, and thus there would have been no reason why one skilled in the art, who was confronted with the same problem as was faced by Applicants at the time of their invention, would have even consulted *Paltenghe*, let alone been motivated to combine that reference with *Hoover* in the manner proposed in the Office Action.

For all these reasons, Claim 1 believed to be clearly allowable over *Paltenghe* and *Hoover*, whether taken separately or in any possible combination (assuming such combination would even be possible, much less a permissible one).

Each of the independent Claims 32, 42, and 52 is a corresponding apparatus, program, or medium claim, or otherwise contains features similar to those discussed above with regard to Claim 1, and is deemed allowable over *Paltenghe* and *Hoover*, whether taken separately or in any possible combination, by virtue of at least the arguments presented above with regard to Claim 1.

With regard to the rejection of independent Claim 3 over *McConnell et al.*, *Paltenghe*, and *Hoover*, without conceding the propriety of this rejection, Claim 3 has been amended to depend from Claim 1. The recitations of Claim 1 were discussed above.

McConnell et al. relates to registering a signature to a database, and is cited

in the Office Action as teaching a signature processing method for displaying a signature on a display unit, comprising a registering step. However, nothing has been found, or pointed out, in that patent that would teach or suggest inputting and control steps as recited in Claim 1. Furthermore, for the reasons argued above, neither *Paltenghe*, and *Hoover* teaches or suggests the control step of Claim 1, and thus those references are not seen to remedy the deficiencies of *McConnell et al.* as a reference against Claim 1. Therefore, Claim 1 is believed to be clearly allowable over *McConnell et al.*, *Paltenghe*, and *Hoover*, whether considered separately or in combination. Claim 3 also is believed to be clearly patentable over those references as well, at least for the reason that it depends from allowable base Claim 1.

Each of the Claims 34 and 44 contains features similar to those discussed above with regard to Claim 3/1, and is deemed allowable over *McConnell et al.*, *Paltenghe*, and *Hoover*, whether taken separately or in any possible combination, for the same reasons as those presented above in connection with Claim 3/1.

A review of the other art of record, including *Powell*, has failed to reveal anything which, in Applicants' opinion, would remedy the deficiencies of the art discussed above, as references against the above-discussed claims. Those claims are therefore believed patentable over the art of record.

The other claims in this application are each dependent from one or another of the claims discussed above and are therefore believed patentable for the same reasons as are those claims. Since each of these other dependent claims is also deemed to define an additional aspect of the invention, however, the individual reconsideration of the


patentability of each on its own merits is respectfully requested.

This Amendment After Final Rejection is believed clearly to place this application in condition for allowance and its entry is therefore believed proper under 37 C.F.R. § 1.116. In any event, however, entry of this Amendment After Final Rejection, as an earnest effort to advance prosecution and reduce the number of issues, is respectfully requested. Should the Examiner believe that issues remain outstanding, the Examiner is respectfully requested to contact Applicants' undersigned attorney in an effort to resolve such issues and advance the case to issue.

In view of the foregoing amendments and remarks, Applicants respectfully request favorable reconsideration and allowance of the present application.

Applicants' undersigned attorney may be reached in our New York Office by telephone at (212) 218-2100. All correspondence should continue to be directed to our address listed below.

Respectfully submitted,


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